

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 241
By DuBois

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the late Judge James Edward "Jimmy" Matthews, Jr., retired General Sessions Judge for Maury County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Judge Jimmy Matthews; and

WHEREAS, Judge James Edward "Jimmy" Matthews, Jr. was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Judge Matthews had served with acumen and alacrity as General Sessions Judge for Maury County, in which position he earned the respect of members of the bench and bar alike for the exemplary quality of his work and his stalwart commitment to justice and equality under the law; and

WHEREAS, the son of the late James Edward "Ed" Matthews, Sr. and Jim Kennedy Crews Matthews, he was the last child to be born in the James K. Polk home in Columbia. Judge Jimmy Matthews received his primary education at McDowell Elementary School, Whitthorne Junior High School, Columbia Military Academy, and Columbia Central High School; and

WHEREAS, this motivated man began working at the age of nine with the Crescent Amusement Company and eventually entered the automobile business with his father in 1940, owning the Kaiser Frazier agency, and the Studebaker agency, and sharing in the ownership of the Pontiac agency; Jimmy Matthews was also a part owner and general operator of the Huntsville Auto Auction in Huntsville, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, as further demonstration of his impressive work ethic, Judge Matthews also co-owned and operated the Randall & Matthews Real Estate and Auction Sales in Columbia, and was the former owner and operator of Columbia Amusement Company; and

WHEREAS, in 1955, Judge Matthews was appointed to the General Sessions Bench by Governor Frank Clement and made history as the first lay judge to serve in this capacity in Maury County; and

WHEREAS, even before his honorable and astute service on the bench, this remarkable man served his Country with courage and bravery in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and had long been active in supporting our Veterans and American Legion affairs; and

WHEREAS, outside of the courtroom, Judge Matthews was an avid sportsman and participated in numerous associations; he helped to organize Little League football teams, served as a sponsor of the Judge Matthews Little League baseball team and the Peewee football team, and was a promoter for the National Association of Professional Wrestlers because of his own history as a wrestler with tag team partner, former heavyweight champion of the world, Joe Louis. He had also served an impressive tenure as a twenty-five year member of TSSAA; and

WHEREAS, even with these numerous involvements, Judge Matthews found time for participation as a member of the Herbert Griffin American Legion Post 19, La Societe 40 & 8 Voiture 1394, and the Columbia Elks Lodge; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, he had been named a Paul Harris Fellow by the Columbia Rotary Club and was a recipient of the Liberty Bell Award from the Maury County Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, Judge Matthews was an active and devout member of the West Seventh Street Church of Christ, which he served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Judge Matthews was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jimmy Matthews enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Mary Jane Hammond and was the proud parent of sons and daughters-in-law, Richard and Donna Matthews and Jim and Teresa Matthews and the delighted grandfather of four grandchildren, Holland Matthews, Elise Matthews, Katie Halsey, and Carmen Tanner; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his daughter, Belinda Ann Matthews and his brother, Thomas Bruce Matthews; and

WHEREAS, throughout his entire professional career, Judge Matthews established an outstanding reputation for attentiveness, fairness, and impartiality on the bench and served with probity and acumen as General Sessions Judge for Maury County; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jimmy Matthews leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional jurist and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Judge James Edward "Jimmy" Matthews, Jr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Judge Jimmy Matthews.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.